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# THE ANTI-UNION.

PRICE 2D.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 19 1799.

No. XXIV.

TO THE  
PEOPLE  
OF  
Ireland.

—quis enim jam non intelligat artes?—

JUV. SAT. 4<sup>th</sup>.

THAT the endeavours to reduce this kingdom to the most abject state of helpless subordination to Great Britain, which have been lately made, and those which are still threatened to be attempted, sprung from no sudden impulse, or temporary cause, is too obvious to be doubted of by any man. It is now plain, that all the councils which have directed, and all the transactions which have taken place in Ireland for a series of years past, have been bent (so far as the British minister could incline them) with a tendency to accelerate the attainment of this object. It would, undoubtedly, be a speculation curious in its pursuit, and useful in its end, to investigate and develop the injurious policy of those councils, and pernicious progress of those transactions, so far as the interests of Ireland were involved in them; curious, as opening the book of national ambition (perhaps depravity) to the eye of philosophy; useful, in inculcating the necessity of national harmony for the preservation of national liberty. But this is an enquiry not properly within the present design of this paper; beside, although the distemper which afflicts this country is, in its distemper, chronic; yet, as it now suffers under a violent paroxysm, however alteratives are necessary to work a radical cure, medicines more expeditious in their effects must be administered to meet the present attack.

It is natural to the human mind, when apprehensive of a great evil, to apply itself to the removal of that which brings the objects of its fear nearest to the view, rather than of that, which being less obtrusive, though more dangerous, might be in reality more likely, eventually, to inflict it. Thus, though there may be, and I have no doubt are, many causes much more likely to super-induce upon my country the complicated ills of that detestable measure, which it is the avowed intention of your paper to ward it from, yet, the speech of Mr. Pitt, the prime minister of England, lately delivered in the parliament of that kingdom, obtains an involuntary

precedence of them all, and occupies my thoughts instinctively. I have read it with that anxious care which a deep interest in its subject must necessarily beget, and thought I found in it little but assertions unsupported by proofs, facts grossly misstated, deceitful prospects artfully exhibited, subtleties sophistically reasoned upon, threats formidable in sound, but dangerless in reality, indirectly held out, and certain injuries cautiously endeavoured to be hid from view. 'Tis true, though these seemed to be the distinguishing characteristics of this speech, yet they appeared dressed out with consummate ability, almost irresistibly impressive where it was delivered, but little calculated to convince the reason of a thinking Irishman. Thus it struck me, and with this idea of it I should have remained undaunted with respect to its consequences, but observing the administration which had undertaken the imposition of a yoke upon this nation, sedulous in distributing it at the public expence, as one of the instruments they intended to employ in their work. Seeing the money of the people squandered in the publication of a speech, which argued in *another country only, or on one side* of a question which involved the dearest interests of this. Seeing that administration open the national purse, not to relieve the national distress, but to endeavour at warping the national judgment, I began to fear the means were better adapted to the end than they appeared to me to be, and that kind of alarm seized upon my mind which is great in proportion to the incomprehensibility of the danger. Further reflection has recalled my courage, and I now mean to address one or two letters to you, containing such remarks upon the different parts of this speech as have been either least obviated already by others, or which may appear in a different light from that in which it was viewed by them.

The insidious fallacy of Mr. Pitt's assertion relative to the divisions in our House of Commons on the question of the Union, has been so ably and sufficiently exposed in your 21<sup>st</sup> number, that it would be worse than superfluous to dwell on that now—I therefore pass it over.

\* Mr. Pitt urges in favor of his measure the internal treason which ravages this country, but there are two circumstances respecting this subject which he has altogether omitted to consider. He has not mentioned the causes—the true and genuine causes of that treason; nor has he proved, or indeed attempted to prove, that the adoption of an Union would be the *only* means of curing, or would at all remove it. Mr. Pitt has not touched upon the political history of this country for

\* Page 11 of the printed Speech.

some years past, which would exhibit the governors of Ireland irritating and inflaming every subdivision of the people one against the other; would shew them pursuing the most discordant and contradictory systems of administration; would hold them out as never suffering any plan of internal regulation to be followed to completion; would stigmatize them as using all endeavours to render the parliament contemptible in the eyes of the people; would point at them as playing on the hopes and fears of different religious sects, carefully balancing, and diligently opposing them. He has cautiously avoided himself, and studiously averted the eyes of his hearers from looking on the page which might present such damning truths to the view. It was therefore hid from his English auditors—but not so with my heretofore infatuated countrymen—they are beginning to read it with attention, even though they behold it with detestation; but they find in it the road to the only Union necessary to the happiness of Ireland. Why Mr. Pitt dwelt upon the efforts, but never went in search of the causes, it would be unnecessary to enquire—it is obvious. Why such causes were established, or such efforts flowed from them, perhaps he would tell; and we might guess surely, however this may be, that man must be either wilfully blind, or incorrigibly stupid, who does not discover at once both the drift and the turpitude of the measure now passing within the sphere of his observation. Is it the suggestion of fear, or the creation of fancy, that rebellion is kept alive by the extension of every hope of impunity to the traitor; that mid-day murder and open robbery stalk through the land, unchecked and unobserved, to any other intent than as they might tend to produce their portion of dismay and submission; that devastation scatters horrors under the very eyes of the inactive garri-son. If these things have any real existence, must not the man, who observes them, ask, whence they arise and wherefore are they? But Mr. Pitt is content to argue upon matters just as he finds them. It would divert the course of his prescience too far, if he cast a retrospective glance beyond the period of French attempts on this country; a prescience which he exercises, not like Cassandra, for we know the source of his inspiration too well to doubt the veracity of his predictions. He has foretold events, and we must believe him—mark his prophetic words: \* “But if struggles of this sort may and *must* return again, if the worst dangers are those which are yet to come, dangers which may be greater from being more disguised.” Read the scroll with awful attention, for it is stretched to you by an arm clothed with power. Receive the prophecy with fear, for the certainty of its accomplishment is ensured by the former works of the prophet. Precipitate yourselves, to avoid the consequences of the dreadful denunciation, into the gulph prepared for you, which like the grave, will shelter you from all human evils, for the oracle tells you, thus *only* you can escape the horrors

of its fulfilment. But let me coolly ask, is this an argument capable of persuading Irishmen to the surrender of every thing estimable to them nationally considered, or can Mr. Pitt's mere assertion, *that it is so*, convince their reason that a legislative Union with Great Britain, is the *only* thing within the range of human events which can render them peaceful, flourishing, and happy? Is there a man in this kingdom capable of observation, who may not satisfy himself, that a great portion of the dissensions which have distracted this country, and which now distract it, may be traced to the policy of the British cabinet? If so, must he not see that a British minister, arguing on these dissensions, (without adverting to their causes,) in support of any favored scheme of his own, reasons on the ill effects of facts occasioned in a great measure by himself, and thus endeavors contrary to every principle of justice, to take advantage of his own wrong. Must he not see that the very existence of such dissensions, so caused, is one of the strongest possible proofs that that measure is not the only cure for them, to enforce the adoption of which they were in reality inflicted, and that so far from being a remedy for the distemper, that to arrive at it was the cause of the complaint? Must not the result of his conviction then be, a determination not to be duped by arts so long successfully practiced to the rendering him the instrument of national distractions, which may be so ingeniously converted into arguments against himself?

§ Mr. Pitt dwells long on the necessity of the connexion between these kingdoms. The subject well deserves it. It is of such importance, that sure I am, there is no man in this country, who merits the name of Irishman, who would not willingly resign every thing worthy of estimation to preserve it. Even the horrors of the year 1798, prove the fact—proudly prove it. From the inestimable value of that connexion, however, he endeavors to establish another argument of fear in favor of his plan; and here, let me observe generally, that the pervading complexion of all his arguments, intended to influence this country, takes the deadly hue of fear: A colour which they certainly very naturally acquire from the means used to give them birth. But different, far different indeed, is the conclusion, that the mind of Mr. Pitt, in truth and reality, draws on this subject, from that which he would impress upon us as the result of his own reasoning: He knows that the immense value of the thing is the best guarantee of its duration—He knows perfectly well that it is so manifestly, not only the interest, but indeed the very means of existence of both countries, no separation can ever be seriously apprehended. I fear not to assert that this connexion is the means of existence to *both* countries: For the proud pre-eminence of Great Britain, among the nations of the earth, rests more on the connexion between these countries, than it is here necessary to investigate: A pre-eminence, which she has gloriously exerted in order to erect an

asylum for liberty, and maintain the freedom of Europe; and while she has experienced it, may she never forget it. He knows no desire of separation will ever arise in the heart of any man in either kingdom, sufficient to create a just ground of alarm, while the natural safety of both forbids it. But either fondness for this favorite object, the natural desire of a British minister to relieve his own country at the expense of this, the pressure of the embarrassments great exertions have caused in Great Britain, the ambition of domination, the fancied glory of achieving the exploit, or some unexplored motive, prevents him either from seeing, or induces him to shut his eyes wilfully against the admission of two facts, or indeed what is much more likely, knowing that they would injure his argument, he intentionally suppressed them. The first is, that if ever the relative situation of the two countries should be so altered, as that mutual interest should proclaim their separation, (an event which most certainly is beyond the reach of human penetration to discover even the most distant probability of its occurring) no legal bond of Union will be of the smallest efficacy in comparing them together: until such an incalculable change of affairs takes place, and while both possess and prize national liberty, they will act in concert from the strongest of all possible motives, the actual safety of both. The other is, that if ever the power of oppression of the one over the other should be vested in either, the probability is, that the possession of such a power, will beget in the nation exposed to oppression, even though it should not be exerted, the desire of separation, and that, although the safety of both should be sacrificed in its indulgence. That a legislative Union with Great Britain would expose Ireland to the possibility of such oppression, is capable of demonstration, and is indeed admitted by Mr. Pitt himself, who argues on the improbability of its ever being exerted, and the little reason Ireland has to apprehend it, from the tried unanimity of Great Britain in other and similar cases. Thus, I am certain that a separation would be much more likely to be offered by an United legislature, than from Ireland's retaining the independence of her's, and that Ireland now enjoys a in greater degree the advantage of a fear in Great Britain, that an attempt at oppression might be fatal to both nations, the means of repressing injury in its first approach, and a certainty of securing to herself advantages, which though the deprivation of them possibly might not compel her to a disruption from Great Britain, yet the possession of them may contribute materially to her prosperity, which altogether give a stability to her connexion with Great Britain, far more powerful than any bonds of compact, or articles of Union, could by any possibility bestow, and place the idea of separation far beyond the limits of reasonable apprehension.

HIBERNICUS.

**W**ANTED, about 220 hearing trumpets for all the members of the H— of C—, except Sir H— C—, that they may be able in future to discern all manner of noises in the gallery.—N. B.—The new P—e S—t being accustomed to listen, and expert at over-hearing, may be excused the use of a trumpet.

Wanted, a bag, a few law books, a case of pistols; and a few other cases in point for the new P—e S—t.

Wanted, crumbs of comfort for such expectant commissioners as cannot be immediately supplied with places, and are at present much chop-fallen.

Wanted, a school-master for the treasury bench. Capt. P— might procure a cast one from the navy: He must understand accounts for the sake of the new C— of the E— and the young candidate commissioners. The new chairman must learn from him to read out, and the Secretary to "Speak plain."

From the HERALD'S OFFICE, Feb. 15, 1799.

**T**HE Dublin Herald at Arms (though in this single point he differs from Sir C— or F—) is of opinion, that the new peers to be made in consequence of their support given to the minister on a late occasion, ought to carry the battoon or mark of bastardy on their escutcheons as not being true born Irishmen. He begs to refer them to Mr. Canning and the editors of the Sun, who will furnish them with supporters gratis. For their crests he thinks for many reasons they should take a viper;— and as for mottos, he says, they may find them any where, such as

"Dedecorum pretiosus emptor."

"Vendidit hic auro patriam," &c. &c.